المجلس الإسلامي الأوروبي
Islamic Council of Europe

Few events in 1982 caught the attention of the world's media as strongly as the massacre of hundreds of innocent people in the Sabra and Chatila districts of Beirut. But this was only the last chapter in a war which made 150,000 people homeless, left over 30,000 wounded and nearly 18,000 dead. The 'Palestinian Problem' Israel and Lebanon had been in the news all summer but the events of two days in September outraged public opinion and brought about widespread condemnation of Israel.

THE BATTLE FOR BEIRUT is the first attempt to take a historical look at the summer of '82 in Lebanon, to establish what facts can be established and to put the invasion and massacre into perspective.

Part One - Invasion looks at the long standing tensions and competing territorial ambitions in the Middle East, the military build up and strategic imbalance between Israel and the PLO, the frustrated diplomatic activity and Israel's decision to invade southern Lebanon.

Part Two - Siege concentrates on international diplomatic negotiations, continued Israeli advances and the crippling of supplies and services in Lebanon until the agreement of 19 August for armed Palestinian forces to leave Beirut in return for guarantees for the safety of the civilians left behind.

Part Three - Massacre traces the events of the month between the PLO departure and the massacres at Sabra and Chatila. A reconstruction of the events of 16 and 17 September shows clearly the chains of command and detailed knowledge of the key figures at the time when hundreds of women, children and old men were killed by Phalangist troops. The programme concludes with the verdicts of Israel's own Kahan Commission Report and looks to the future of Palestine.

The programme is compiled from archive news material from the major international broadcast agencies edited to give a historical overview of the events of the summer of 1982.

BATTLE FOR BEIRUT was compiled and written by Nigel Maslin and produced in association with the Islamic Council of Europe.

LEBAAF

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